

# **PREVALENCE AND FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH PSYCHIATRIC MORBIDITY AMONG HOMELESS FEMALES IN CHENNAI**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **BACKGROUND:**

Homelessness is a term used for various concepts like rooflessness, living in an insecure place. As a consequence, they become increasingly vulnerable to mental, social and physical ill health. The present study attempts to understand the socio demographic profile of homeless women, problems faced by them with focus on psychosocial aspects and mental health.

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:**

To estimate the prevalence and factors associated with psychiatric morbidity among homeless females in suburbs of Chennai and to compare the prevalence and factors pertaining to psychiatric morbidity between homeless females in streets and homeless females in night shelters.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

Cross sectional community based descriptive study conducted in Chennai. Sample size is 200. Females aged more than 18 years of age and those who gave informed consent were taken. Study proforma contains socio demographic details, Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (M.I.N.I), International classification of diseases (ICD-10), Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression

(HAM-D), Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HAM-A) scales were used. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS 22.0 version.

## **RESULTS:**

In the sample population of 100 street dwellers, 30 percent were between 31 to 40 years of age, 30 percent were illiterates, 24 percent of street dwelling females and 39 percent of shelter home dwellers were unemployed. 10 percent live alone in streets, 27 percent had poor social support.

23 percent females were living in road side pavements, 55 percent were living in streets for more than 50 years. 24 percent street dwellers and 20 percent of shelter home dwellers were exposed to physical abuse. 14 % street dwellers had sexual abuse.

In the present study, prevalence of depression was 41.5%, prevalence of anxiety disorder was 27%, Psychotic disorder was 2%, Alcohol dependence was 2% and Dementia was 2.5%.

## **CONCLUSION:**

Homelessness has been associated with increased prevalence of psychiatric morbidity in the study population.

**Keywords:** Homelessness, street dwellers, shelter homes, depression, anxiety.